

From: Kirk Patton x111
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/23/02 9:59am
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

Hello,

I would like to express my dissatisfaction with the proposed settlement between the US Department of Justice and Microsoft.

I do not believe the settlement will do anything of substance to curb Microsofts illegal behavior. It has no teeth...

Microsoft maintains its monopoly by controlling the file formats of their business applications like MS-Word, MS-Excel... Users are constantly forced to upgrade to newer versions so they can read documents sent by others who have upgraded.

They managed to produce several applications that have enough attractive features that they won a controlling portion of the market. They maintain this control by keeping the file formats secret. No one will switch to a competing product unless that product can read the files generated by the Microsoft products. Since the file formats are kept secret, this is not possible.

All file formats must be fully documented and freely available.

Currently, the biggest threat to Microsofts current monopoly is the Free Software movement and the operating system Linux.

There is no language in the settlement that would compel Microsoft to open its protocols and file formats to anyone working on an "open source" project. To break free of Microsofts control, "All protocols and file formats must be freely available to anyone to use for any reason."

Thanks,
Kirk

--

Kirk Patton
Pixim Inc.
Sr. Systems Administrator
Phone 650 605-1111
Cell 650 224-0739
Fax 650 934-0560
e-mail kpatton@pixim.com